

IV. APOLOGETICA:

ORTHODOXY, PLURALISM AND GLOBALIZATION

Rev. Associated Professor ADRIAN BOLDIȘOR, PhD¹

Key Words:

Pluralism, globalization, Orthodox Church, glocalization

Pluralism (in all its forms) is closely linked to the idea of globalization, together they are some of the greatest challenges of our times. Pluralism, with its meanings in our daily life, with its advantages and disadvantages that has carried along recent history, “is not an ideology, not a new universal theology, and not a freeform relativism. Rather, pluralism is the dynamic process through which we engage with one another in and through our very deepest differences”.²

Over time, pluralism has become more and more a kind of ideological matter, becoming increasingly difficult to spot and define.

From a religious point of view, pluralism refers both to the pluralism of religions; a type of reality present throughout the world, and to the pluralism of the possibilities of religious engagement in solving the problems that people's lives raise. Pluralism is closely linked to current democratic systems and regimes that place particular emphasis on freedom and equality, integrating diversity and differences of all types.

Nowadays a mono-ethnic or mono-confessional community is no longer possible; the world is much more open than it used to be in the past. In connection with these kind of realities, the Orthodox Church has always advocated for the freedom of the human being, respect for the laws of the state, encouraged the actions that plead for peace in every corner of the world, and also highlighted the importance of particularities in the regions where different populations live. Any form of isolation or exclusion of a person or group of people from public life is a renunciation of the missionary character of the Church.³ The involvement of the Orthodox Churches in the current world

¹ University of Craiova, Faculty of Orthodox Theology, Romania, adi_boldisor@yahoo.com.

² DIANA L. ECK, “The Christian Churches and the Plurality of Religious Communities”, în: *The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation*, Edited by Emmanuel Clapsis, WCC Publications, Geneva, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2004, p. 19. See: ADRIAN BOLDIȘOR, *Ortodoxia ieri, azi, mâine. Teme intercreștine și interreligioase pentru secolul XXI*, Ed. Mitropolia Olteniei, Craiova, 2019.

³ EMMANUEL CLAPSIS, „The Challenge of a Global World”, în: *The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation*, p. 48.

organizations reinforces the idea that the Orthodox can and must participate in the common actions raised by contemporary pluralistic communities today, and must formulate a common response to the various issues that arise.

The term of “globalization” has begun to be used more and more in the late century, especially with reference to the growing development of socio-economic and cultural processes in the world, being closely linked to the spread of democratic institutions. “Globalization has become the notion, the concept, or the key idea by which we understand the transition of human society into the third millennium”.⁴

This has led to the emergence of new social structures and new ways in which the states and ethnic and religious communities interact. Not seldom these ranges of reality have led to hostile actions launched by certain individuals or even the whole communities that have seen in the phenomenon of globalization the element of risk and the greatest threat to their own identity.

The process of globalization is dual in its nature, and it can be both potentially good for humankind and a possible disaster. It is precisely this double chance that its dialectic lies in. Over time, Christians have often had difficulty accepting this dualism. But the surrounding reality and present life must be viewed from an eschatological point of view; only in this way can provincialism and confessionalism be abolished, as well as the “modern myths” of a globalized society that measures everything in individual terms. The eschatological vision is the optimistic response given by Christians to today's world that lacks both trust and optimism.⁵

The positive as well as the negative effects of globalization refer to economic, social and political life, without neglecting the transformations in the cultural and religious fields. Among the positive effects one can note: the development and advancement of technology, the exchange of goods and outstanding achievements in all fields, the ease of communication between people, the fight against certain global diseases, limiting illiteracy, the rewrite of the role of women and youth in society, freedom of thought, promoting

⁴ EMMANUEL CLAPSIS, “The Challenge of a Global World”, p. 51. „The word «globalization» has acquired a special meaning and is used to summarize certain developments and trends that have characterized the final quarter of the second millennium. In the area of economics in particular, this term denotes the process by which the economies of different countries have become fully integrated into a worldwide economic system, one that has concentrated production, trade, and information around the globe in a few geographical centers. The ensuing process of internationalization has led to a greater degree of mutual dependence among societies around the world” (Archbishop ANASTASIOS YANNOULATOS, *Facing the World. Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*, Translation by Pavlos Gottfried, WCC Publications, Geneva, 2003, 179).

⁵ JOHN CHRYSYSSAVGIS, „Orthodox Spirituality and Social Activism: Reclaiming Our Vocabulary – Refocusing Our Vision”, in: *The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation*, p. 133.

democracy, bringing peoples closer, etc. On the other side, among the negative effects one can mention: the widening gap between countries, the economic gap, the growing number of people living on the brink of poverty, global environmental disasters, the development of crime and corruption, non-compliance with freedoms, fundamental rights of man and, last but not least, “new, major shifts of labor power, with new waves of immigrants and economic refugees flooding the prosperous countries. The increase in unemployment is becoming a significant threat, and xenophobia and racism have reached dangerous proportions in many countries”.⁶

In the sociology of religions, the term of “globalization” began to be used when Roland Robertson’s studies were published, for whom this phenomenon meant a “compression of the world”: a process of acceleration triggered by the meeting of cultures, peoples and civilizations in the sense that the world is “declining”. This interpretation was an alternative to the theory of equality between modernity and universality, between secularism and intercultural confluence. It has gone so far as to speak, in terms of opposition, of “the globalization of religion” *versus* “globalization and religion”. Regardless of the answers given to these issues, the impact of globalization on religion could not be denied. In this context, the representatives of the different religious traditions have chosen one of the two choices: to embrace strategies of cultural defense or to be in favour of those based on active engagement in the process of globalization.

Whether or not globalization is rejected, religious traditions must be aware of the impact that this phenomenon has on the world as a whole and on each individual particularly. One of the key changes that globalization has brought has been related to “de-territorialization”, followed by “re-territorialization” of the whole world, with a strong impact on religions that are no longer present in certain parts of the world, missing from others.

Recently, in the discourse on the relationship between “global” and “local”, theories have been formulated that suggest the replacement of the term “globalization” with that of “glocalization”. This is a consequence or even an alternative to current realities. Not seldom were the times when the new concept was seen as melting the tension between the local and global, thus becoming an opportunity to make visible the dualism of the process. Local and global aspects are both present in current life; the future is no longer a mere product predicted by forces at a “macro” level, nor by organizations and individuals at a “micro” level.

Glocalization has gathered a number of dynamic religious elements, including the spread of religions on all continents, their location, their de-

⁶ Archbishop ANASTASIOS YANNOULATOS, *Facing the World. Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*, p. 183.

territorialization and re-territorization, as well as subsequent hybridization. At the heart of this edifice is the confirmation that not all cultures in the world are isolated or “genuine”, but the result of the ongoing processes of hybridization and integration of cultural elements borrowed from elsewhere. Finally, globalization includes multiple glocalizations: religion is themed along with the particularity of the place. Thus, one can speak of the “global-local” or “glocal” character of religion.⁷

Proponents of the term “glocalization” see it as an argument in favor of defining the relationship between religion and globalization as a “glocal” return, with different versions of combining the “local” with the “global”. *Vernacularization* combines religious universalism with a particular language; as it was the case with Greek and Latin in Christianity and with Arabic in Islam. Vernacularization is usually associated with historical empires. *Indigenization* combines religious universalism with local particularism by adopting religious ritual, expression, and hierarchy in a specificity of ethnic particularism. Indigenization is often associated with ethical and cultural survival. *Nationalization* is considered the essential element of religious institutions. In this sense, the Church of England is emblematic, followed pretty closely by the Orthodox Churches. *Transnationalization* is a different side of global nationalization, being mainly related to the phenomenon of migration, which spread in the Orthodox world before and after the fall of the communist bloc in Eastern Europe. The phenomenon is related to the world of the diaspora.⁸

Based on these observations, in the interpretation of various researchers of the phenomenon, the relationship between religion and globalization can be reformulated starting from glocalization, with reference to the interaction between local cultures and world religions. However, it is not clear how transnationality can be a type of glocalization as long as the former involves different locations and several cultural references. Thus, the idea of “autochthonism” can be added to the characteristics of glocalization.⁹ In this interpretation, the Orthodox Church is seldom close to the idea of innovation; especially to that of conservatism. The innovative part of Orthodoxy would be the creative reinterpretation of the Tradition for the modern world; especially with regard to the phenomenon of migration and the various real situations it raises, people having to face to it.

⁷ VICTOR ROUDOMETOF, “Forms of Religious Glocalization: Orthodox Christianity in the *Longue Durée*”, in: *Religions* 5, 2014, p. 1020.

⁸ VICTOR ROUDOMETOF, “Forms of Religious Glocalization: Orthodox Christianity in the *Longue Durée*”, pp. 1024-1029.

⁹ MARIA HÄMMERLI and JEAN-FRANÇOIS MAYER, “Introduction”, in: *Orthodox Identities in Western Europe. Migration, Settlement and Innovation*, Edited by Maria Hämmerli and Jean-François Mayer, Ashgate Publishing Limited, Dorchester, 2014, p. 20.

An important moment in the analysis of the place and role of globalization in the life of Christians took place at the General Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Harare (1998), when the issue debated was how Christians relate to the phenomenon of globalization. With Harare, Christians of all faiths have understood the importance of the challenges of globalization and reflected on how the gospel message should be conveyed in the present world. During this General Assembly, the participants acknowledged that globalization is a fact of life and reinforced the idea that this phenomenon must be analyzed through a joint effort. In these discussions, too, the Orthodox made important contributions, bringing up several times the pressing issues that were to be analyzed.¹⁰

Related to the phenomenon of globalization, an Orthodox point of view was formulated a year later, during the meeting in Davos, by the Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, who emphasized the idea that the Christian Churches have generated another way of globalization, related to the expression “spiritual ecumenism”. This differs from the phenomenon of globalization since it is based on brotherly love and respect for the human person, while globalization seeks to unite all cultures into one in agreement with those who have a position to influence the others.¹¹ The process of uniting all in one way of thinking cannot be accepted from a Christian point of view. This idea was also reinforced by Archbishop Christodoulos, who emphasized that the phenomenon of globalization seeks to create a new era in which all people would be the same. It is about exacerbating syncretism on a global scale, encompassing all religions, cultures and historical traditions.¹² In this interpretation, globalization has become a global phenomenon with rather more negative consequences for people.¹³

¹⁰ *Turn to God, Rejoice in Hope. Orthodox Reflections On the Way to Harare. The report of the WCC Orthodox Pre-Assembly Meeting and selected resource materials*, Edited by Thomas FitzGerald and Peter Bouteneff, World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1998.

¹¹ “Moral Dilemmas of Globalisation: Address Given by His All Holiness The Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew at the 1999 Annual Davos meeting of the World Economic Forum”, <https://www.apostolicpilgrimage.org/peace-and-tolerance/-/asset_publisher/qZEISX6XZL90/content/moral-dilemmas-of-globalisation-address-given-by-his-all-holiness-the-ecumenical-patriarch-bartholomew-at-the-1999-annual-davos-meeting-of-the-world-e/32008?inheritRedirect=false&redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.apostolicpilgrimage.org%2Fpeace-and-tolerance%3Fp_p_id%3D101_INSTANCE_qZEISX6XZL90%26p_p_lifecycle%3D0%26p_p_state%3Dnormal%26p_p_mode%3Dview%26p_p_col_id%3Dcolumn-1%26p_p_col_pos%3D1%26p_p_col_count%3D2>, accessed: 15.11.2021.

¹² CHRISTODOULOS Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, *Rooting of Joy and Hope. The Word and Role of Orthodoxy in the European Union*, Athens, 2001, p. 14.

¹³ EMMANUEL CLAPSIS, “The Challenge of a Global World”, p. 55.

One of the most frequent criticisms of the phenomenon of globalization is related to the promotion and favorization of the economic interests of certain Western countries; leading to a unification and standardization of cultures according to certain plans. Although, globalization creates a network of interactions between cultures without leading to the creation of a single one in which mixed heterogeneous elements are found, this process can still affect traditional cultures leading not to their disappearance or limitation, but to interpenetration and cultural changes. Traditional cultures are embraced by the globalized world in a complex and dialectical process that consists in reconfiguring them both in contact with other cultures and with each other, when, in the same territory, different ideas and life forms meet. This complex process can lead either to the disappearance of traditional cultures or to their intertwining with elements from the cultures of peoples that are less economically, politically, socially or culturally developed compared in comparison with the Western model.

On the other hand, globalization is not always as “global” as this term implies. It is more exclusive and parish like. There are certain fields in which our society is more transnational than its generic name of “global” illustrates.¹⁴ In this context, spiritual ecumenism preached by Orthodox Christians refers to the unity of human beings in a bond of love and cooperation, beyond racial and ethnic elements. Love transcends all boundaries and applies to all people, regardless of religion since all people are created in the image of God. From this point of view, the ecumenism of Orthodoxy differs substantially from what the phenomenon of globalization means; especially from an economic point of view: love is based on mutual love between people, while the phenomenon of globalization focuses primarily on the economy, leading to leveling consciences in order to obtain economic benefits. Having a look at the way globalization is understood today, it can be said that economic development in particular and globalization in general have lost their value when they have chosen to focus on the welfare of some at the expense of others. Thus, globalization can be seen as a double-edged sword.¹⁵

Based on these observations, it must be emphasized that the Orthodox Church is not against the economic progress that serves humankind as a whole. However, although globalization is often understood in economic terms nowadays, our Jesus Christ the Savior teaches us that man will not only feed on bread.¹⁶ For our fellow, bread loses its material value and is enabled with

¹⁴ His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, *Encountering the Mystery. Understanding Orthodox Christianity Today*, p. 154.

¹⁵ His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, *Encountering the Mystery. Understanding Orthodox Christianity Today*, p. 162.

¹⁶ Matei 4, 4.

spiritual value, thus reaching the transcendence of the present economic reality that can thus become a servant of humanity.¹⁷

These ideas were reiterated and deepened during the Great and Holy Council in Crete in 2016, when the Orthodox Church focused on the impact of the phenomenon of globalization on the present world. “The contemporary *ideology of globalization*, which is being imposed imperceptibly and expanding rapidly, is already provoking powerful shocks to the economy and to society on a world-wide scale. Its imposition has created new forms of systematic exploitation and social injustice; it has planned the gradual neutralization of the impediments from opposing national, religious, ideological and other traditions and has already led to the weakening or complete reversal of social acquisitions on the pretext of the allegedly necessary readjustment of the global economy, widening thus the gap between rich and poor, undermining the social cohesion of peoples and fanning new fires of global tensions. In opposition to the levelling and impersonal standardization promoted by globalization, and also to the extremes of nationalism, the Orthodox Church proposes the protection of the identities of peoples and the strengthening of local identity. As an alternative example for the unity of mankind, she proposes the articulated organization of the Church on the basis of the equality of the local Churches. The Church is opposed to the provocative threat to contemporary man and the cultural traditions of peoples that globalization involves and the principle of the «autonomy of the economy» or «economism», that is, the autonomization of the economy from man’s essential needs and its transformation into an end in itself. She therefore proposes *a viable economy founded on the principles of the Gospel*. Thus, guided by the words of the Lord, «man shall not live by bread alone» (Luke 4. 4), the Church does not connect the progress of mankind only with an increase in living standards or with economic development at the expense of spiritual values”.¹⁸

¹⁷ His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch BARTHOLOMEW, *Encountering the Mystery. Understanding Orthodox Christianity Today*, pp. 159-160.

¹⁸ “In a global society, oriented towards ‘having’ and individualism, the Orthodox Catholic Church presents the truth of life in and according to Christ, the truth freely made incarnate in the everyday life of each man through his works «till evening» (Ps 103), through which he is made co-worker of the eternal Father [«We are co-workers with God» (1 Cor 3:9)] and of His Son [«My Father is working still, and I am working» (John 5:17)]. The grace of God sanctifies in the Holy Spirit the works of the hands of the man who works together with God, revealing the affirmation in them of life and of human society. Christian asceticism is to be placed within this framework; this differs radically from all dualistic asceticism that severs man from life and from his fellow man. *Christian asceticism and the exercise of self-restraint*, which connect man with the sacramental life of the Church, do not concern only the monastic life, but are characteristic of ecclesial life in all its manifestations, as a tangible witness to the presence of the eschatological spirit in the blessed life of the faithful” (“Encyclical of the Holy

Starting with the Age of Enlightenment, which has influenced all fields of life, modern globalization has come to replace the transcendent God with “the secularized world superpower, which is also transcendent for every country and society when analyzed individually and for their members. Thus, the whole Western world, which once embraced Christianity, keeps on having secularized Christian principles, which absolutize the relative and lead to world totalitarianism, because they have no real connection with Christ, the Giver of freedom.¹⁹ In this situation, generated by the phenomenon of globalization, the state is closer and closer to its own disappearance, leaving the room to some supranational centers that control everything at the economic, informational, public opinion, etc. level. The state no longer has the power or the means to create a community suitable for its citizens. “By advertising globalization and transferring national rights and responsibilities to supranational centers, local differentiation is abolished and homogenization tendencies are promoted. Local customs are killed and others are inoculated, regardless or even opposed to the traditions of local societies”.²⁰ This has double challenged the Church: to act for the unity of all people and to save the peculiarity of each human being and his or her identity. “Thus the chimera of today's globalization brings to the fore the truth of universality; a truth that illustrates the nature of the Church”.²¹

Based on these remarks, in the globalized age we live in, there are voices arguing that the Church adapt to modern times and comply with the demands of man nowadays. Thus, theologies that meet present needs were promoted, but with a short existence, because they bore a selective nature, stopped only by the immanent. They also placed special emphasis on social issues without making any reference to the Lord's Cross or Resurrection. “Globalization already advocates for religious syncretism, and social issues get a new approach. The globalization of the economy in today's society is directly related to the globalization of the exploitation of the economically weak by the economically strong. In turn, the globalization of its exploitation leads to the globalization of the reaction of the weak. Thus, the globalization of terrorism also emerges, which then causes the globalization of security measures and norms. In this way, the globalization of political power is

and Great Council of the Orthodox Church”, <<https://basilica.ro/en/encyclical-of-the-holy-and-great-council-of-the-orthodox-church/>>, accessed: 15.11.2021).

¹⁹ Prof. Dr. GEORGIOS MANTZARIDIS, *Morala creștină. II. Omul și Dumnezeu. Omul și semenul. Poziționări și perspective existențiale și bioetice* [Christian Morality. II. Man and God. Man and His Fellow. Existential and Bioethical Sides and Perspectives], traducere de Diacon Dr. Cornel Constantin Coman, Ed. Bizantină, București, 2006, p. 345.

²⁰ Prof. GEORGIOS MANTZARIDIS, PhD, *Christian Morality. II. Man and God. Man and His Fellow. Existential and Bioethical Sides and Perspectives*, p. 350.

²¹ Prof. GEORGIOS MANTZARIDIS, PhD, *Christian Morality. II. Man and God. Man and His Fellow. Existential and Bioethical Sides and Perspectives* p. 350.

promoted, which appropriates and promotes world overpower. In fact, it was this superpower itself which long ago was concerned with advertising its globalization and dictating to other states, indirectly or directly, the policy that they should follow".²²

Beyond this criticism and much more on the phenomenon of globalization, it must be accepted that the effects of globalization are felt everywhere; from the simplest acts and needs of man to his / her most complex actions. The challenges the Church faces are not necessarily those of seeing and preventing the negative side of globalization, but in emphasizing its values and using them in a positive way. The pluralistic world should not be seen as an obstacle to Orthodoxy, but as an opportunity in the sense that the Church is challenged to profess her own teaching, starting from the words of Apostle Paul: "Though I am free and belong to no one, I have made myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings".²³ This approach can be labelled as "personal pluralism" and it is a positive analysis of the Roman Empire-specific pluralism of the first Christian century, with direct reference to Jews and pagans. The apostle of the Gentiles refers to the blessings of the gospel concerning the salvation of all people, a theme that is still relevant nowadays. "This, then, is the challenge of a pluralistic society for our Orthodox Church: to encounter the contemporary world as St Paul did in imitation of Christ, the God who became a human being. The more pluralistic encounters we effect for the sake of the gospel, the more opportunities we have to become all things to all people, in the Pauline sense, sharing in the blessings of the gospel".²⁴

Jesus Christ our Savior lived in a pluralistic community that did not conform to the requirements and expectations of the Jews. The holy land was ruled by Caesar, with Hellenized Jews, conservative Sadducees, foreign nations, and conquering Romans, all living together in the same territory. The population was mixed; several languages were spoken, and the freedom of

²² Prof. GEORGIOS MANTZARIDIS, PhD, *Christian Morality. II. Man and God. Man and His Fellow. Existential and Bioethical Sides and Perspectives* p. 357.

²³ 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

²⁴ Archbishop DEMETRIOS of America, "The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation", in: *The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation*, p. 4.

movement and the right to demand equality for all were followed. The Good News was spread in this pluralistic world, and so it can be spread today in today's postmodern society, which is in many ways similar to that of the first Christian century.²⁵

The most significant example in this regard is that of the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Apostles spoke to the Gentiles in tongues, being filled with the Holy Spirit.²⁶ This event remains paradigmatic for the way in which the Good News can be rooted in the cultures and languages of the planet. The role of the Church is not to create a certain culture, but to prove that Christ can be received in any language and in any culture, regardless of the historical time we live in. "This global perspective is in the blood of the Orthodox, blood that is constantly cleansed in the Eucharist by the blood of Christ, the redeemer of the world. Instead of a globalization that transforms nations and people into an indistinguishable, homogenized mass, convenient for the economic objectives of an anonymous oligarchy, the Orthodox religious experience and vision propose a communion of love, a society of love, and call on people to make every effort in that direction. The truly Christian thing is to continue believing when there seems to be no hope, by grounding oneself in the certainty that ultimately there is Another who controls the evolution of the universe – he «who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty» (Rev. 1, 8). The truly Christian thing is to live with the certainty that a global communion of love between free persons is an ideal that deserves to be struggled for. The truly Christian thing is to be active and productive at the local level by maintaining a perspective that is global, and to fulfil our own obligations responsibly by orienting ourselves toward the infinite – the God of Love – as the purpose and goal of life".²⁷

After His Resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ the Savior tells the Holy Apostles to remain in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit descends.²⁸ It was important for them to remain in Jerusalem until Pentecost, but after this time one can no longer speak of this city as the center of the world, but from an eschatological perspective, as the New Jerusalem, a multinational city²⁹, that is the whole creation renewed by Christ the Lord. The Greek term "oikoumene" is used several times in the New Testament³⁰ to refer to the inhabited part of the world (according to the Greco-Roman example of the

²⁵ Archbishop DEMETRIOS of America, "The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation", p. 7.

²⁶ Acts: 2:1-4.

²⁷ Archbishop ANASTASIOS YANNOULATOS, *Facing the World. Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*, p. 199.

²⁸ Acts: 1:4-5.

²⁹ Revelation: 21:24.

³⁰ Matthew: 24: 14; Luke 2:1; Acts: 19: 27; Romans 10:18.

time), so that in the Epistle to the Jews³¹ St. Paul uses it in reference to all creation or the world reborn that was to exist.³²

From an Orthodox point of view, this analysis is not an urge to passivity over time, but to active and creative involvement; humankind is called to achieve the meeting between creation and God, to participate in the building of human civilizations into the Body of the Lord and to fight to annihilate evil from history. A true (ecumenical) person is called to embody in his / her whole life the modernism of the Eucharistic moment. Every person, every nation, every civilization and every age is called to be turned into the Holy Eucharist. Any de-universalization, as a way to stay away from the eschatological view, is not good. For the Orthodox, there is no longer a certain holy center; all places in the world are equally holy, since holiness, with Christ, can exist everywhere faith and Eucharistic meeting at the Holy Altar are.³³

The church and the world are not two different ontological structures, as if one were made of “holy” matter and the other of “evil” matter. From a Christian perspective, the whole world, without exception, is conceived as a creation of God, the Uncreated One. Thus, the purpose of the world is to become the body of the Son freely. This invitation does not come from this world: “If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first”.³⁴ Man responds to this invitation as an adventure of freedom in history. From this point of view, the Church is that part of the world that has accepted the invitation, another part of the world hasn’t accepted the invitation, yet. The opposition between the Church and the world mentioned in the Bible³⁵ is not one that is based on nature, but on choice and direction. This is also the reason why the Church is ceaselessly praying for the life of the whole world and for the rejoin of all in Christ.³⁶

Ecclesiastical language itself is always an invitation. The personal encounter is in the Truth, as long as the Truth is not something, but Someone: Christ Himself. Theology is not a treatise on God, but an invitation to His Body. Therefore, until the end of time, the Church has no right to stop inviting God's creation to communion with Him. The dialogue between the Church and the world cannot be stopped. No one can put an end to the end itself. The

³¹ *Hebrews*: 1: 6; 2: 5.

³² ATHANASIOS N. PAPATHANASIOU, “Anchored in the Future. Globalization and Church Consciousness: An Orthodox Perspective”, in: *The Ecumenical Review*, 56, 2/2004, pp. 229-230.

³³ ATHANASIOS N. PAPATHANASIOU, “Anchored in the Future. Globalization and Church Consciousness: An Orthodox Perspective”, p. 230.

³⁴ *John* 15:18.

³⁵ *John* 15: 18-20; 16, 33; 1 *Corinthians* 3:19; *Galatians*: 6:14.

³⁶ ATHANASIOS N. PAPATHANASIOU, “The Language of Church and World. An Adventure of Communication or Conflict?”, in: *The Ecumenical Review*, 51, 1/1999, p. 41.

message of the Church remains the same, but every language is called to become flesh, so that the message of salvation may be possible in every community, in every nation, and in every age.

In the present context, no society can isolate itself; can become an island among other islands, because the phenomenon of globalization has spread everywhere. The space within we live is universal, so that no society can be indifferent to what is happening in the world, being directly or indirectly affected by the changes that take place in other territories. The phenomenon of globalization has turned any local community into a pluralistic community. Thus, the Church must address this globalized society. Thus, the way she understands to address to man nowadays, becomes an extraordinary challenge for Orthodoxy. Based on Christian principles, the main issue is how to make the transition from the human community generally speaking, to the communion of love that encompasses all people, the surrounding nature, and the whole universe, that is all creation of God.

One of the important aspects that explain the openness of Orthodoxy to the phenomenon of globalization and pluralism is the concept of “person”, referring to the absolute availability of the human being to all people, beyond selfish individualism. The modern world increasingly tends to limit human being to his / her external characteristics (race, sex, social class, etc.); this being a reductionist approach that leads more to a segregation of people rather than their unification. The most important “betrayal” of globalization is that it ignores the concept of “person”. At the same time, it is also a challenge for a careful analysis of this principle and the consequences it brings to the present world. Globalization places a special emphasis on the institutional level, leaving aside the person and freedom, in order to ensure security. Thus, this has led to the sacrifice of the person in favor of the essence, of the substance. Orthodoxy, however, constantly refers to the uniqueness of the human being, which makes each person remain in touch with all the others, created in the image of God and striving to be like Him. Uniqueness does not divide people into different groups, but unites them in liturgical community. Thus, the concept of “person” is of vital importance in the Orthodox thinking and it is best embodied in the images of the saints; the ones who encompass all of humanity. They can be called “global people”, without whom globalization remains only counterfeit reality.³⁷

The Orthodox Church has emphasized and keeps on emphasizing the value of the human being in today's globalized world as she used to do it in the past. Individual rights, as seen today, despite many positive elements, often distort the specific truth of the person, since the human being is seen beyond individuality and individual rights. Being created in the image of God and

³⁷ GEORGIOS I. MANTZARIDIS, “Orthodox Observations on Peace and War”, p. 125.

craving to be like Him, man must embrace all humankind. This truth is to be found in the Holy Trinity, where every divine Person, without losing his peculiarities, possesses the whole Godhead. The reality of every human being must be seen in the perspective of deification, the ideal of Orthodoxy.³⁸

Christian teaching has preached the truth that all existence is in the care of God; the divine is actively present in all fields of reality. Modernism has changed the role and place of the divine, especially through the phenomenon of secularization, leading to the privatization of religion, to its transition to the edges of society. Secularization has placed a special emphasis on individualism; life was no longer seen as a unitary whole. Thus, a multitude of beliefs and ideologies have developed resulting into a fragmentation of human values. Eventually, religion came to become a peripheral part of today man's life and society in general. Thus, the Church is left out of the social life of the community. The phenomenon of secularization is increasingly taking over modern man, based on an egocentric anthropocentrism that rejects transcendent truths. "It is about a new kind of «heresy» that alters the meaning of the world and that of man, requiring a thorough analysis, evaluation and confrontation".³⁹

There are also Orthodox interpretations that highlight the positive values of secularization, seen at the same time as "the daughter of Athens and Jerusalem. Its beneficial effects are visible. Emancipation from clerical tutelage allowed the West to explore the physical universe and the human *psyche*. In the field of art, painting and music flourished. Life expectancy increased, as did the number of people, women liberated themselves, and the planet was unified by the creation of what Teilhard de Chardin called the «noosphere». European culture appears today as the first *open* culture in history, tending to revise all arts and myths of humankind, with no other implicit philosophy than a philosophy of *the other accepted in his / her otherness*".⁴⁰ It would be dangerous for Christians to point out only the negative aspects of secularization in order to fight against them. "In the secularized world, which will last be it only as a shield against the attack of fanaticism, there are many traces of its Greek and biblical roots. Respect for the other, freedom of spirit, all that is best in pluralist democracy (in which other forms except than those can be created, often compromised, of Western

³⁸ GEORGIOS I. MANTZARIDIS, "Orthodox Observations on Peace and War", pp. 126-127.

³⁹ ANASTASIE YANNOULATOS, *Mission following the footsteps of Christ. Theological Studies and Homilies*, Translation from Greek by Deacon. Stefan L. Toma, PhD, Andreiana Publishing Press, Sibiu, 2013, p. 90.

⁴⁰ OLIVIER CLÉMENT, *Adevăr și libertate. Ortodoxia în contemporaneitate. Convorbiri cu Patriarhul Ecumenic Bartolomeu I, [Truth and freedom. Orthodoxy Nowadays. Conversations with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I]*, traducere: Mihai Maci, Ed. Deisis, Sibiu, 1997 p. 135.

societies), all these, Bartholomew I argued, are rooted in the biblical revelation of the person and in the difference drawn up by Christ between the kingdom of God and that of Caesar. Secularized society is therefore not something unknown to us Christians, and we must try to re-direct it from within”.⁴¹ According to this interpretation, secularization appears as a shelter against fanaticisms that, through religious wars, led to the emergence of this phenomenon in the modern age. In the midst of these realities, the voices of the Orthodox must focus on emphasizing the importance of “the significance of life’s sacredness. The misunderstanding of freedom as permissiveness leads to an increase in crime, the destruction and defacement of those things held in high regard, as well as the total disrespect of our neighbor’s freedom and of the sacredness of life. Orthodox Tradition, shaped by the experience of Christian truths in practice, is the bearer of spirituality and the ascetic ethos, which must especially be encouraged in our time”.⁴²

During the discussions on modernism and postmodernism, the Orthodox theologians have emphasized the importance of divine-human communion. The way Orthodoxy understands divine-human communion leads to a judgment that pleads for a democratic and secularized space beyond the existing formulations. This support for democracy and secularization does not mean endorsing excessive individualism or ideological secularism. Those who claim that God does not exist in these forms are told that God manifests Himself more in spaces that superficially present themselves as atheists.⁴³ For the Orthodox, the principle of divine-human communion is negotiated neither by modernity nor by postmodernity or after. This is the substantial contribution that can be made to ecumenical dialogue. “The present gap between western and eastern Christianity is conceived as being generated by their respective attitudes towards what is called *modernity*”.⁴⁴

After having carried out an analysis on the effects of atheism on the world, postmodernism can be interpreted as a denial of the Truth. But one should not equal postmodernism in the way it is seen in the Western Christian world with the Eastern post-communist cultural environment. “The secularization accepted in the west as a normal evolution of the religious phenomenon came to the east as a radical and destructive rejection of religion,

⁴¹ OLIVIER CLÉMENT, *Truth and freedom. Orthodoxy Nowadays. Conversations with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I*, p. 138.

⁴² “The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today’s Word”, <<https://basilica.ro/en/the-mission-of-the-orthodox-church-in-todays-world-final-document/>>, accessed: 15.11.2021.

⁴³ ARISTOTLE PAPANIKOLAOU, “Orthodoxy, Postmodernism, and Ecumenism: The Difference that Divine-Human Communion Makes”, in: *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 42:4/2007, p. 543.

⁴⁴ ION BRIA, “Postmodernism: an Emerging Mission Issue”, in: *International Review of Mission*, 86, 343, Oct 1997, p. 417.

i.e., materialist atheism. The Orthodox churches in ex-communist countries flowed into the global trend of postmodernism through the praxis of a violent nihilism opposition between Byzantine culture and communist ideology (marxism also is a child of western Enlightenment). The result is another version, an *alien*, hybrid form of the ordinary postmodernism known in the western churches as separation between politics and religion”.⁴⁵

Under these conditions, there is a topic on an “eruption of religious passion” in the modern and present age⁴⁶; this age is more religious than any other in history. There are two exceptions to the present global religious reality: the first refers to Western and Central Europe, also called “Eurosecularity”⁴⁷ and it is one of the essential features of modern European culture. The second characteristic is related to a sociological argument related to the transformation of secularism into a contemporary ideology. In the analysis of this situation one must start from the fact that the main feature of modernity is pluralism in all its aspects; religious pluralism has become part of the process of globalization. Even if one can talk about globalization in the past, too, it can still be noticed that the current process of the phenomenon has reached a level that it has never been reached before.

Although religion has been marginalized, becoming a kind of “private business”, there are many discussions and approaches regarding the importance it should have in modern society. Opinions on the need for religion in society have been drawn, reaching a “civic function”. However, religion must not do what is expected from it scientifically, economically, culturally, or what the state expects it to do for its citizens politically and socially. The role of religion is to change people's consciences regardless of the sectors in which they activate. Thus, religion can actively take part into the public life of believers. “The characteristic of individual, not communitarian, determination is directly related to the emergence of the subject and the individuality that occurred par excellence in modern times and is therefore considered an integrating element of modernity”.⁴⁸ One can talk about subject and individuality only in modernism; the individual gains the value of his / her own consciousness; attaining a great degree of autonomy from the community. Distancing from traditional ties, this emergence leads to the separation between religion and society and the non-religious state. The assertion of

⁴⁵ ION BRIA, “Postmodernism: an Emerging Mission Issue”, in: *International Review of Mission*, 86, 343, Oct 1997, p. 417.

⁴⁶ PETER L. BERGER, “Orthodoxy and Global Pluralism”, in: *Demokratizatsiya*, 13, 3/2005, p. 438.

⁴⁷ PETER L. BERGER, “Orthodoxy and Global Pluralism”, p. 438.

⁴⁸ PANTELIS KALAITZIDIS, *Ortodoxie și modernitate. O introducere [Orthodoxy and Modernism. An Introduction]*, traducere din neogreacă de Florin-Cătălin Ghiț, prefață de Radu Preda, Ed. Eikon, Cluj-Napoca, 2010 p. 71.

individuality is related to religion particularization that passes from public to private space. "These two elements, which are at the same time two fundamental modern features – namely religion privatization and its individual understanding, as well as the prevalence of the individual over the community dimension – are together the greatest issue and probably the most serious obstacle for the meeting and desired dialogue between Orthodoxy and modernity".⁴⁹ However, the Orthodox Church places special emphasis on the community and social structure of the Church.

Christianity and other religions have come up with different answers to the realities of modern society. Some communities have isolated themselves from today's society, others have integrated into the new structures modernism created. The Orthodox ethos, without giving up its identity, cannot overlook the new realities believers live. This means to be in a constant dialogue with the modern world without giving up one's own tradition and faith overflowing. In the world we live in, dialogue is the only option people have for solving the problems of their own existence.⁵⁰ Modern globalization, with all its positive and negative effects, asks for and is based on dialogue through which solutions can be found so that people, belonging to different cultures and civilizations, can live in peace and understanding. In this sense, dialogue must also bear an internal element that refers to both local and global dialogue. Dialogue thus becomes the premise of global peace, which must not be seen only as an avoidance of war, but as a creative type of effort to create the optimal conditions for people's free development, regardless of the areas they live in or the territories they come from.⁵¹

The public discourse of the Church depends on understanding how believers relate to other people. Public or private relations that the Orthodox have with the representatives of other faiths and ideologies depend on the way in which others are viewed from a Christian point of view, with direct reference to the complete Orthodox doctrinal and liturgical tradition. Finally, the fear and rejection of the other have their roots in the rejection of the Other, of God Himself, in connection with the ancestral sin, with the fact that Adam rejected his Creator; a sin that is rooted in the feeling of fear of the Other as the supreme Otherness.⁵²

⁴⁹ PANTELIS KALAITZIDIS, *Orthodoxy and Modernism. An Introduction*, p. 73.

⁵⁰ EMMANUEL CLAPSIS, *Orthodoxy in Conversation. Orthodox Ecumenical Engagements*, WCC Publications, Geneva, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2000, p. 136.

⁵¹ IOANNIS PETROU, "Peace, Human Development and Overcoming Violence", in: *Violence and Christian Spirituality. An Ecumenical Conversation*, Edited by Emmanuel Clapsis, WCC Publications, Geneva, 2007, p. 24.

⁵² EMMANUEL CLAPSIS, *Orthodoxy in Conversation. Orthodox Ecumenical Engagements*, pp. 140-141.

Orthodox teaching focuses on the idea of reconciliation between unity and diversity. Thus, when one speaks of God, he /she witnesses the teaching on the Holy Trinity, One Being, and Three Persons. Jesus Christ our Savior talked to people of different religious faiths during His earthly staying. The presence and work of the Holy Spirit in the world are signs of communion; the eschatological event strengthening the idea of interpersonal relationships. The condition of genuine communion is the acknowledgement of the difference between people. The incarnation of God's Word illustrated the supreme way in which God communicates with the world, showing His love. Christ gathers them all in His love and transforms them. This relationship cannot be seen as external to the Cross; the supreme Sacrifice of the incarnate Son of God. The Holy Spirit is actively present in history and throughout the world, uniting all the scattered. He is the One who brings eternity into time and opens the world to eschatological realities, renewing and transforming existence in order to receive future divine realities. In this sense, Christians' relationships with other people are not about their past, but about their future. The church deviates from the genuine Christian message when her peculiarity is detached from the relationship with the universality of God's love.⁵³

The Church, the Mystical Body of the Lord, must not only live the gospel, but also preach it without changing anything in its messages. A rethinking of theological discourse according to modern and contemporary categories can also be a kind of threat to believers, as it leads to confusion, especially with regard to the many moral aspects to which contemporary man must relate. Orthodox speak of the unity of the faith, not of personal choices based on one's abilities and selfish pleasures and desires. Believers must reconcile their faith with their actions for the benefit of others, without deviating from the teaching they have received. They must focus on the idea of the universality of the evangelical message that encompasses and completes both the private and the public dimension of human life in history. The speech of the Church is adjusted to the needs of the people of our time, without giving up the teaching of original faith and liturgical life.

At the same time, it would be a mistake to believe that all differences can be solved through dialogue. There are certain situations when some opinions and actions cannot be tolerated. There are situations when the teachings and moral life of believers are in conflict with certain modern views shared by most people. When this is the case, true faith must not be given up just to agree with certain social, political, or economic authorities. In order not to lose their identity, Christians must know and take into account all aspects of life as lived in our century: "This is a necessary exercise: to examine

⁵³ EMMANUEL CLAPSIS, *Orthodoxy in Conversation. Orthodox Ecumenical Engagements*, p. 142.

thoughtfully our present situation, the historical antecedents and the trends leading into the future of our global society”.⁵⁴

An important issue related to the phenomenon of globalization is ensuring and maintaining peace on earth. Globalization has enriched knowledge in all areas, but it has also led to a kind of extreme naturalism. The same thing happened in politics. “If in the Middle Ages the dominant consciousness was expressed through religion, in the modern era it is expressed especially through politics”.⁵⁵ In today's globalized age, religious aspect is to be identified in various social institutions, not as a substitute for politics, but as one of its elements which not only criticizes violence, but it often uses faith to justify long term violent behavior. Today, some religions and religious movements support citizens regardless of their political opinions, others tend to be part of the same area politics is in, proposing a political agenda of a religious trend, thus advocating for a “religious nationalism”. This domination in the political field does not have the meaning of secular power, but it is a way to abolish the existing political order. The interference of religion in politics leads to a violent war. This happens when religion is seen as a mere product of the human intellect; all religions justifying their involvement in issues of violence.

Religions, generally speaking and the Church, particularly speaking practiced a strong transnational influence over time, being considered precursors of globalization, types of “proto-” or “micro-” globalization. Under these conditions, present globalized age is characterized by a transnational nature that has led to insecurity at all levels of life. Both individuals and communities and societies are looking for a sense of their own identity that is clothed in a variety of characteristics. Social and institutional diversity should not be a source of violence; as this is not allowed in a multicultural society. In the globalized world, people and communities must be seen as having multiple identities. People have both common and different opinions, thus promoting tolerance. Limiting human being to only one-feature results into intolerance.

Religious violence is often seen as a combination of three elements: modernism, the rebirth of nationalisms, and religious belief. Thus, some speak of “nationalist faith” and “religious patriotism”. Under these conditions, the Church must plead for multiculturalism and leave out any form of fanaticism, preserving the dialogue in order to eliminate marginalization of any kind, of any form of violence, thus paying respect to diversity.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Archbishop DEMETRIOS of America, “The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation”, p. 4.

⁵⁵ NIKOS KOTZIAS, “Violence, Religion and Globalization”, in: *Violence and Christian Spirituality. An Ecumenical Conversation*, p. 15.

⁵⁶ NIKOS KOTZIAS, “Violence, Religion and Globalization”, p. 19.

Today's world is complex, interdependent, multicultural, multiethnic, multireligious and pluralistic. In this context, in order to promote reconciliation and peace, Christians need to find ways to communicate and collaborate with people and communities of other religions, ideologies, cultures, and beliefs. This collaboration does not mean giving up to the particularities of each in terms of how peace is seen, but a theology of involvement and cooperation with other religious communities must be developed. Thus, during the Third Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference (1986), the urge addressed to the Orthodox Christians to be active in promoting peace was reiterated, "because the peace of Christ is the ripe fruit of the rejoin of all in God; of the manifestation of the organic unity, in Him; of the human race and of the world; of the universality in the body of Christ; of the ideas of peace, liberty, equality, and social justice, and, finally, of the fruitfulness of Christian love among the people of the peoples of the world. Real peace is the fruit of the earthly victory of all these Christian ideals. It is the highest peace for which the Orthodox Church always prays in her daily prayers, asking it from God, the One Who can do all things and hears the prayers of those who address Him in faith".⁵⁷ In this regard, real examples, pastoral projects, and opportunities meant to enable the Orthodox Christians to participate in present social transformations and to contribute to a culture of peace must be taken into consideration. Christians need to be more and more aware of the need to convey the message of peace and justice throughout the world as a true confession of faith. These ideas were again reiterated during the Holy and Great Synod of Crete in 2016: "the Orthodox Church considers it is her duty to encourage all that which genuinely serves the cause of peace (Rom 14: 19) and paves the way to justice, fraternity, true freedom, and mutual love among all children of the one heavenly Father as well as between all peoples who make up the one human family. She suffers with all people who in various parts of the world are deprived of the benefits of peace and justice".⁵⁸

Peace has no religious boundaries. Through inter-Christian and interreligious dialogue and collaboration, communities must overcome misunderstandings, stereotypes, caricatures, and other inherited or acquired disputes. Their voices pleading for peace must be heard in public as well. Orthodox tradition firmly points out the fact that violence and war spring out

⁵⁷ "The Decisions of the Third Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference, Chambésy-Geneva, Switzerland, October 20th-November 6th", 1986, in: Rev. Prof. Dr. VIOREL IONITA, *Decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Assemblies from 1923 to 2009 – Towards the Holy and Great Orthodox Church*, BASILICA Publishing House of the Romanian Patriarchate, Bucharest, 2013, p. 208.

⁵⁸ "The Mission of the Orthodox Church in Today's World", <<https://basilica.ro/en/the-mission-of-the-orthodox-church-in-todays-world-final-document/>>, accessed 15.11.2021.

from the hearts of sinful people. But peace arises from the transformation of consciousness and heart. Thus, the issue of peace is based on three essential directions: the inner peace of every human being, the vertical peace, that is, the peace with God, and the horizontal peace, that is, the peace of the whole world, as it is preached by the Holy Mass. Peace is not an abstract term, but an ontological and spiritual event.⁵⁹ Jesus Christ our Savior said that He did not come to bring peace to the world⁶⁰, but He also said that He brought peace for all.⁶¹ If all accept Christ and live in peace, then the whole world will be at peace. The gospel of the Lord leaves no room for justification in order to make war, which is founded on a series of injustices. True peace is related to the justice and freedom that God has promised to human beings through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, as a gift and vocation.⁶² From an Orthodox point of view, external peace is assured only if the internal peace of every human being is ensured. Otherwise, external peace remains only a utopia. Finally, the contribution that the Orthodox Church makes to the establishment of world peace lies in the plea for inner peace; i.e. peace of heart.

Abstract:

From a religious point of view, pluralism refers both to the pluralism of religions; a type of reality present throughout the world, and to the pluralism of the possibilities of religious engagement in solving the problems that people's lives raise. Pluralism is closely linked to current democratic systems and regimes that place particular emphasis on freedom and equality, integrating diversity and differences of all types. The process of globalization is dual in its nature, and it can be both potentially good for humankind and a possible disaster. It is precisely this double chance that its dialectic lies in. Over time, Christians have often had difficulty accepting this dualism. But the surrounding reality and present life must be viewed from an eschatological point of view; only in this way can provincialism and confessionalism be abolished, as well as the "modern myths" of a globalized society that measures everything in individual terms. The eschatological vision is the optimistic response given by Christians to today's world that lacks both trust and optimism.

⁵⁹ GEORGIOS I. MANTZARIDIS, "Orthodox Observations on Peace and War", p. 117.

⁶⁰ *Matthew* 10:34.

⁶¹ *John* 14:27.

⁶² EMMANUL CLAPSIS, "The Peaceable Vocation of the Church in a Global World", in: *Just Peace. Orthodox Perspectives*, p. 163.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. BARTHOLOMEW, His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch, *Encountering the Mystery. Understanding Orthodox Christianity Today*, Doubleday, 2008.
2. BERGER, PETER L., "Orthodoxy and Global Pluralism", in: *Demokratizatsiya*, 13, 3/2005.
3. BOLDIȘOR, ADRIAN, *Ortodoxia ieri, azi, mâine. Teme intercreștine și interreligioase pentru secolul XXI*, Ed. Mitropolia Olteniei, Craiova, 2019.
4. BRIA, ION, "Postmodernism: an Emerging Mission Issue", in: *International Review of Mission*, 86, 343, Oct 1997.
5. CHRISTODOULOS Archbishop of Athens and All Greece, *Rooting of Joy and Hope. The Word and Role of Orthodoxy in the European Union*, Athens, 2001.
6. CHRYSYSAVGIS, JOHN, „Orthodox Spirituality and Social Activism: Reclaiming Our Vocabulary – Refocusing Our Vision”, in: *The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation*, Edited by Emmanuel Clapsis, WCC Publications, Geneva, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2004.
7. CLAPSIS, EMMANUEL, „The Challenge of a Global World”, in: *The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation*, Edited by Emmanuel Clapsis, WCC Publications, Geneva, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2004.
8. CLAPSIS, EMMANUEL, *Orthodoxy in Conversation. Orthodox Ecumenical Engagements*, WCC Publications, Geneva, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2000.
9. CLÉMENT, OLIVIER, *Adevăr și libertate. Ortodoxia în contemporaneitate. Convorbiri cu Patriarhul Ecumenic Bartolomeu I*, [Truth and freedom. Orthodoxy Nowadays. Conversations with His All Holiness Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I], traducere: Mihai Maci, Ed. Deisis, Sibiu, 1997.
10. DEMETRIOS, Archbishop of America, "The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation", in: *The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation*, Edited by Emmanuel Clapsis, WCC Publications, Geneva, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2004.
11. ECK, DIANA L., "The Christian Churches and the Plurality of Religious Communities", in: *The Orthodox Churches in a Pluralistic World. An Ecumenical Conversation*, Edited by Emmanuel Clapsis,

- WCC Publications, Geneva, Holy Cross Orthodox Press, Brookline, Massachusetts, 2004.
12. HÄMMERLI, MARIA and MAYER, JEAN-FRANÇOIS, "Introduction", in: *Orthodox Identities in Western Europe. Migration, Settlement and Innovation*, Edited by Maria Hämmerli and Jean-François Mayer, Ashgate Publishing Limited, Dorchester, 2014.
 13. KALAITZIDIS, PANTELIS, *Ortodoxie și modernitate. O introducere [Orthodoxy and Modernism. An Introduction]*, traducere din neogreacă de Florin-Cătălin Ghiț, prefață de Radu Preda, Ed. Eikon, Cluj-Napoca, 2010.
 14. KOTZIAS, NIKOS, "Violence, Religion and Globalization", in: *Violence and Christian Spirituality. An Ecumenical Conversation*, Edited by Emmanuel Clapsis, WCC Publications, Geneva, 2007.
 15. MANTZARIDIS, Prof. Dr. GEORGIOS, *Morala creștină. II. Omul și Dumnezeu. Omul și semenul. Poziționări și perspective existențiale și bioetice [Christian Morality. II. Man and God. Man and His Fellow. Existential and Bioethical Sides and Perspectives]*, traducere de Diacon Dr. Cornel Constantin Coman, Ed. Bizantină, București, 2006.
 16. PAPANIKOLAOU, ARISTOTLE, "Orthodoxy, Postmodernism, and Ecumenism: The Difference that Divine-Human Communion Makes", in: *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, 42:4/2007.
 17. PAPATHANASIOU, ATHANASIOS N., "Anchored in the Future. Globalization and Church Consciousness: An Orthodox Perspective", in: *The Ecumenical Review*, 56, 2/2004.
 18. PAPATHANASIOU, ATHANASIOS N., "The Language of Church and World. An Adventure of Communication or Conflict?", in: *The Ecumenical Review*, 51, 1/1999.
 19. PETROU, IOANNIS, "Peace, Human Development and Overcoming Violence", in: *Violence and Christian Spirituality. An Ecumenical Conversation*, Edited by Emmanuel Clapsis, WCC Publications, Geneva, 2007.
 20. ROUDOMETOF, VICTOR, "Forms of Religious Glocalization: Orthodox Christianity in the *Longue Durée*", in: *Religions* 5, 2014.
 21. "The Decisions of the Third Pan-Orthodox Preconciliar Conference, Chambésy-Geneva, Switzerland, October 20th-November 6th", 1986, in: Rev. Prof. Dr. VIOREL IONITA, *Decisions of the Pan-Orthodox Assemblies from 1923 to 2009 – Towards the Holy and Great Orthodox Church*, BASILICA Publishing House of the Romanian Patriarchate, Bucharest, 2013.

22. *Turn to God, Rejoice in Hope. Orthodox Reflections On the Way to Harare. The report of the WCC Orthodox Pre-Assembly Meeting and selected resource materials*, Edited by Thomas FitzGerald and Peter Bouteneff, World Council of Churches, Geneva, 1998.
23. YANNOULATOS, ANASTASIE, “*Mission following the footsteps of Christ. Theological Studies and Homilies*”, Translation from Greek by Deacon. Stefan L. Toma, PhD, Andreiana Publishing Press, Sibiu, 2013.
24. YANNOULATOS, Archbishop ANASTASIOS, *Facing the World. Orthodox Christian Essays on Global Concerns*, Translation by Pavlos Gottfried, WCC Publications, Geneva, 2003.